

Mr. Praise God Barbones his Petition

As it was presented to the Parliament, Thursday the 9th of February 1660, in behalf of Himself, and many Thousands. With the Parliaments Answer thereunto.

To the Parliament of the Commonwealth of England, &c.



The Representation and Addresses of the Well-affectioned Persons, Inhabitants of the Cities of London and Westminster, and places adjacent, being Faithful and constant Adherers to this Parliament, who are resolved (by the assistance of Almighty God) to Stand by, Assert and Maintain their Authority against all Opposers, notwithstanding the present Confidence and bold Attempts of the Promoters of Regal Interest, by the declared Enemies of their Cause and Authority.

WHereas the GOOD OLD CAUSE was for Civil and Christian Liberty, against Oppression and Persecution; the Oppressors and Persecutors were chiefly the King and his Lords, and Clergy, and their Adherents; who to effect their Designs, raised War against the Parliament: Whereupon the Parliament in Defence of Civil and Christian Liberty; call the Oppressed and Persecuted to their Aid, by whose Assistance the Oppressors and Persecutors have been Subdued, Kingship and Peerage Abolished, and Persecution checkt; by which the number of Conscientious Friends to the Parliament have been so exceedingly Increased, that they are now (by Gods assistance) in a far more able capacity of keeping down their Enemies, than they were in those Times when they Subdued them.

Nevertheless, so watchful hath the restless Enemy been to make advantage, that what (time after time) he hath lost in the Field, he hath endeavoured to regain even in the Parliament Council. Where, because they had not the Face to bring in the King, with the former Oppressions and Persecutions, they shrouded and vailed themselves, one while under a Personal Treaty, another while under a cloak of zeal against Blasphemy and Heresie: Their endeavours being to bring in the King upon any Terms, to cherish the Persecutors Party, and to Brow-beat their most Conscientious Opposers.

Upon which pretence, nevertheless they have through tract of Time, and the unsettledness of Government, prevailed so far, as under the notion of a Moderate Party to get the Subtilest of their Friends into many Places of Trust and Command, both Civil and Military: Through whose Countenance and Encouragement, albeit the Parliament upon good grounds Voted the Government by King and Lords, Useless, Burthenous, and Dangerous; and declare largely for Liberty of Conscience; yet of late a general boldness hath been taken to plead a Necessity of returning to the Government of King and Lords, a taking in of the Kings Son; or which is also for the return of the justly Secluded Members, or for a Free Parliament, without due Qualifications; whereby the Good old Cause of Liberty and Freedom (so long contended for against Royal Interest, with the Expence of much Blood and Treasure.) And the Assertors thereof will be prostituted to Sacrifice the Lusts of the Enemies of the Commonwealth, wherein they have prevailed so far, that unless all Conscientious Persons in Parliament, Army, Navy and Commonwealth speedily unite, and watchfully look about them, as the Sword will Certainly (though secretly and silently) be Stollen out of their Hands; so also will they find all Civil Authority suddenly fall into the Hands of their enraged Enemies, and a return of all those Violences, Oppressions and Persecutions, which have cost so much Blood and Treasure to Extirpate.

The Serious Apprehensions hath stirred up your Cordial Friends to desire you to use all possible endeavours to prevent the Commonwealths Adversaries in this their dangerous Stratagem, and as the most effectual means thereunto, we Pray,

I. That you will admit no Person or Persons to Sit or Vote in this, or any future Parliament or Council of State; or to be in any Office or Judicatory, or any Publick Trust in the Commonwealth, or Command in the Army, Navy, or Garrisons; or to be a publick Preacher to the People at Sea or Land, or any Instructor of Youth, except such only as shall Abjure, or by Solemn Engagement renounce the pretended Title of Charles Stuart, and the whole Line of the late King James; and of every other Person as a single Person, pretending, or which shall, pretend to the Crown or Government of these Nations of England, Scotland and Ireland, or any of them, and the Territories therentoo belonging to them, or any of them; or any other single Person, Kingship, Peerage; or any Power Co-ordinate with the Peoples Representatives in Parliament; and all Coercive Power in matter of Religion, according to a Vote of a Grand Committee of this Parliament, on the 11 of September 1659.

II. We further Pray, that it may be Enacted, That whosoever shall move, offer, or propound in Parliament, Council, or any other Court, or Publick Meeting, any matter, or thing in order to the Introducing of Charles Stuart, or any of that Family, as aforesaid, or any other single Person, House of Lords, Coercive Power in matter of Religion, or a Power Co-ordinate with the Peoples Representatives in Parliament, may be Deemed and Adjudged Guilty of High Treason, and may suffer the pains and penalty thereof. And whosoever shall in Parliament, Council, or any other publick Court or Meeting move for, or propose the Revocation of this Law (when by you Enacted) may be Deemed and Judged Guilty of High Treason, and suffer the pains and penalties thereof.

In Prosecution whereof, we shall stand by you with our Estates and Lives to assert and maintain your Authority against all Oppositions whatsoever, notwithstanding the present Confidence and bold Attempt of Our and your Enemy.

Signed Praise God Barebone, with the Promise of the Subscriptions of many Thousands.

Resolved by the Parliament, that the Petitioners have the Thanks of the House for their Expressions of their Good Affections to the Parliament.

The Petitioners being again called in, Mr. Speaker gave them this Answer.

Gentlemen, the House have read your Petition, and they do find that you have been such as have constantly born them good Affections, and that your Affections are the same still: And for the Expressions of your good Affections, the House hath commanded me to give you Thanks, and in their Names I do give you Thanks accordingly.

It is Desired, That all such as are Lovers of the Good old Cause, do send in their Subscriptions to this Petition unto the place appointed in those Papers that comes to their Hands; yea, and with all the speed that may be, to testify their Zeal to the Good old Cause, by their being in readiness to Assert it.